Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

 1-47 (Cancelled)

 48. (New) A method of facilitating electronic communications, the method comprising:

 filtering, at a communications service provider associated with a recipient, messages sent to the recipient from a sender by applying message filtering rules associated with the recipient, the message filtering rules being configured to block at least one future message from the sender;

 receiving, at the communications service provider, an electronic communication from a third party service provider, the third party service provider being configured to facilitate a transaction of goods or services between the sender and the recipient, and the received electronic communication being configured to be used by the communications service provider to enable the recipient to receive the at least one future message from the sender at a future time for a limited amount of time, the at least one future message being associated with the transaction for goods or services between the sender and the recipient;

 in response to receipt of the electronic communication from the third party service provider, modifying the message filtering rules associated with the recipient to enable the recipient to receive the at least one future message from the sender during the limited amount of time;

 enabling receipt by the recipient of messages, including the at least one future message, until the limited amount of time has lapsed; and

 after the limited amount of time has lapsed, changing the message filtering rules associated with the recipient to again filter messages from the sender as if the electronic

communication from the third party service provider had not been received by the communications service provider.

49.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein the transaction comprises a potential future transaction.

50.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein the transaction comprises a transaction that occurred prior to receipt of the electronic communication by the communications service provider.

51.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein the third party service provider is configured to enable users or entities to find and purchase goods or services offered by other users or other entities online.

52.   (New) The method of claim 51, wherein the transaction comprises a purchase by the recipient of goods or services offered by the sender.

53.   (New) The method of claim 52, wherein the third party service provider facilitates the transaction by displaying an offer by the sender of the goods or services to the recipient.

54.   (New) The method of claim 51, wherein:

         the third party service provider is configured to enable the users or the entities to auction goods or services to the other users or the other entities online, and

         the transaction comprises a purchase or a potential future purchase by the recipient of goods or services offered by the sender in an auction.

55.   (New) The method of claim 54, wherein the at least one future message comprises a message that includes information sent by the sender to answer a question by the recipient regarding the auction.

56.   (New) The method of claim 55, wherein the electronic communication is sent by the third party service provider to the communications service provider in response to the recipient submitting, to the third party service provider, a question for the seller regarding the auction.

57.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein the third party service provider is configured to enable users to find information online about goods or services offered by entities in a particular geographic area.

58.   (New) The method of claim 57, wherein the sender comprises one of the entities.

59.   (New) The method of claim 58, wherein the particular geographic area is a city and the entities include at least one of local realtors, private high schools, and utility companies offering services in the city.

60.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein:

the third party service provider is configured to enable users to purchase goods from the third party service provider, and

the transaction comprises a purchase, by the recipient, of shipping services offered by the sender to ship goods purchased by the recipient from the third party service provider.

61.   (New) The method of claim 60, wherein the at least one future message comprises a message that includes shipping or order information for the goods purchased by the recipient from the third party service provider.

62.   (New) The method of claim 61, wherein the electronic communication is sent by the third party service provider to the communications service provider in response to the recipient purchasing the goods from the third party service provider.

63.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein:

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the third party service provider is configured to facilitate a transaction to purchase airline tickets by the recipient from the sender, and

the transaction comprises a purchase, by the recipient, of airline tickets offered by the sender.

64. (New) The method of claim 60, wherein the at least one future message comprises a message that includes flight updates.

65. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the electronic communication is sent by the third party service provider to the communications service provider in response to the recipient purchasing the airline tickets from the sender.

66. (New) The method of claim 48, wherein receiving an electronic communication from the third party service provider includes receiving the electronic communication over a trusted channel between the third party service provider and the communications service provider.

67. (New) The method of claim 66, wherein the trusted channel comprises a channel over a virtual private network.

68. (New) The method of claim 66, wherein the trusted channel comprises a non-anonymous channel.

69. (New) The method of claim 48, wherein modifying the message filtering rules associated with the recipient includes:

determining whether identifying information for the sender appears in a white-list associated with the recipient; and

adding the identifying information for the sender to the white-list associated with the recipient in response to a determination that the identifying information for the sender does not appear in the white-list associated with the recipient.

70. (New) The method of claim 69, wherein changing the message filtering rules associated with the recipient comprises deleting the identifying information for the sender from the white-list associated with the recipient after the limited amount of time has lapsed.

71. (New) The method of claim 70, wherein changing the message filtering rules further includes:

notifying the recipient that the sender is scheduled to be removed from the white-list; and

asking the recipient whether the sender should be kept in the white-list.

72. (New) The method of claim 69, wherein the identifying information for the sender comprises an e-mail address for the sender.

73. (New) The method of claim 48, wherein modifying the message filtering rules associated with the recipient includes:

determining whether the communication service provider has a global white-list for message filtering;

if it is determined that the communications service provider has a global white-list, automatically adding information identifying the sender and a transactional identifier to an entry in the global white-list, the transactional identifier indicating that the entry is associated with the transaction of goods or services between the sender and the recipient;

determining whether the recipient has a personal white-list for message filtering; and

if the recipient has a personal white-list, automatically adding the information identifying the sender and the transactional identifier to an entry in the personal white list of the recipient.

74. (New) The method of claim 73, wherein automatically adding information identifying the sender and a transactional identifier to the global white-list includes adding a type indicator, the type indicator permitting special handling of messages.

75. (New) The method of claim 73, further comprising:

determining whether the communications service provider has a global black-list for message filtering;

if it is determined that the communication service provider has a global black-list, determining whether the sender is blocked by the global black-list from sending messages to the recipient, and automatically modifying the global black-list to permit the sender to send messages to the recipient;

determining whether the recipient has a personal black-list for message filtering; and

if the recipient has a personal black-list, determining whether the sender is blocked by the personal black-list from sending messages to the recipient, and automatically modifying the personal black-list to permit the sender to send messages to the recipient.

76.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein the communications service provider comprises an e-mail service provider.

77.   (New) The method of claim 76, wherein modifying the message filtering rules associated with the recipient includes:

adding an e-mail address of the sender to a list of approved e-mail sender addresses associated with the recipient, whereby the recipient can receive e-mail from the sender; and

deleting the e-mail address of the sender from the list of approved e-mail sender addresses associated with the recipient in response to completion of a specified end trigger associated with the transaction for goods or services between the sender and the recipient.

78.   (New) The method of claim 77, wherein adding the e-mail address for the e-mail sender includes adding the e-mail address and a transactional identifier to an entry in the list of approved e-mail sender addresses, the transactional identifier associating the entry with the transaction for goods or services between the sender and the recipient.

79.   (New) The method of claim 77, wherein adding the e-mail address for the sender includes adding a time stamp.

80.   (New) The method of claim 77, wherein the specified end trigger is receipt of a second electronic communication from the third party service provider by the communications service provider, the second electronic communication indicating that the e-mail address for the sender should be removed from the list of approved e-mail sender addresses associated with the recipient.

81.   (New) The method of claim 77, wherein adding the e-mail address for the sender includes adding an expiration date.

82.   (New) The method of claim 81, wherein the specified end trigger includes expiration of the expiration date.

83.   (New) The method of claim 77, wherein the specified end trigger includes an action initiated by the communications service provider.

84.   (New) The method of claim 77, wherein the specified end trigger includes an action initiated by the e-mail service provider.

85.   (New) The method of claim 77, wherein the specified end trigger includes expiration of a specified time duration.

86.   (New) The method of claim 77, wherein the specified end trigger includes receipt of an e-mail from the sender by the recipient.

87.   (New) The method of claim 77, wherein the specified end trigger includes receipt by the recipient of a threshold number of e-mails from the sender.

88.   (New) The method of claim 48, further comprising:

filtering, at the communications service provider, messages sent to the sender from the recipient by applying message filtering rules associated with the sender;

in response to receipt of the electronic communication from the third party service provider, modifying the message filtering rules associated with the sender to enable the sender to receive messages from the recipient during the limited amount of time;

enabling receipt by the sender of messages from the recipient until the limited amount of time has lapsed; and

after the limited amount of time has lapsed, changing the message filtering rules associated with the sender as if the electronic communication from the third party service provider had not been received by the communications service provider.

89.   (New) The method of claim 88, wherein modifying the message filtering rules associated with the sender includes:

determining whether identifying information for the recipient appears in a white-list associated with the sender; and

adding the identifying information for the recipient to the white-list associated with the sender in response to a determination that the identifying information for the recipient does not appear in the white-list associated with the sender.

90.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein the message filtering rules are configured to block all of the messages from the sender.

91.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein:

modifying the message filtering rules includes placing a user identifier of the sender on a white list, and

after the limited amount of time has lapsed, changing the message filtering rules comprises removing the user identifier of the sender from the white list.

92.   (New) A computer system for automatically configuring message filtering rules, the computer system including:

a communications gateway configured to receive, at a communications service provider associated with a message recipient, an electronic communication from a third party service

provider, the third party service provider being configured to facilitate a transaction of goods or services between a message sender and the message recipient, and the received electronic communication being configured to be used by the communications service provider to enable the message recipient to receive at least one future message from the message sender at a future time for a limited amount of time, the at least one future message being associated with the transaction for goods or services between the message sender and the message recipient; and

a communications filter system configured to:

filter, at the communications service provider, messages sent to the message recipient from the message sender by applying message filtering rules associated with the message recipient,

modify, in response to receipt of the electronic communication from the third party service provider, the message filtering rules associated with the message recipient to enable the recipient to receive messages from the message sender during the limited amount of time,

enable receipt by the message recipient of messages, including the at least one future message, until the limited amount of time has lapsed, and

after the limited amount of time has lapsed, change the message filtering rules associated with the message recipient to again filter messages from the message sender as if the electronic communication from the third party service provider had not been received by the communications service provider.

93.   (New) The computer system of claim 92, wherein the third party service provider is configured to enable users or entities to find and purchase goods or service offered by other users or other entities online.

94.   (New) The computer system of claim 92, wherein the transaction comprises a purchase by the recipient of goods or services offered by the sender.

95.   (New) The computer system of claim 94, wherein the third party service provider facilitates the transaction by displaying an offer by the sender of the goods or services to the recipient.

96.   (New) The computer system of claim 92, wherein:

the communications service provider comprises an e-mail system;

the at least one future message comprises at least one future e-mail to be sent by the message sender to the message recipient in the future; and

the e-mail system is configured to receive the electronic communication from the third party service provider over a trusted channel.

97.   (New) The computer system of claim 96, wherein the trusted channel comprises a channel over a virtual private network.

98.   (New) An apparatus for facilitating electronic communications, the apparatus comprising:

means for filtering, at a communications service provider associated with a recipient, messages sent to the recipient from a sender by applying message filtering rules associated with the recipient;

means for receiving, at the communications service provider, an electronic communication from a third party service provider, the third party service provider being configured to facilitate a transaction of goods or services between the sender and the recipient, and the received electronic communication being configured to be used by the communications service provider to enable the recipient to receive at least one future message from the sender at a future time for a limited amount of time, the at least one future message being associated with the transaction for goods or services between the sender and the recipient;

means for modifying, in response to receipt of the electronic communication from the third party service provider, the message filtering rules associated with the recipient to enable the recipient to receive messages from the sender during the limited amount of time;

means for enabling receipt by the recipient of messages, including the at least one future message, until the limited amount of time has lapsed; and

means for changing, after the limited amount of time has lapsed, the message filtering rules associated with the recipient to again filter messages from the sender as if the electronic

communication from the third party service provider had not been received by the communications service provider.